



State of Wisconsin
Governor Scott Walker



Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Ben Brancel, Secretary

Department of Natural Resources

Cathy Stepp, Secretary

Gypsy Moth Aerial Spraying to Start Soon

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DATCP Contacts: Rick Hummell, 608-224-4591, rick.hummell@wisconsin.gov
Jim Dick, Communications Director, 608-224-5020, james.dick@wisconsin.gov

DNR Contact: Colleen Robinson Klug, 608-266-2172, colleen.robinsonklug@wisconsin.gov

MADISON—Some Wisconsin residents will see and hear loud, low-flying planes at around sunrise beginning in late May. Planes will be spraying for gypsy moth caterpillars, an invasive and destructive pest that feeds on the leaves of many species of trees and shrubs.

Stay updated

Spray dates and times are weather dependent. Sign up online to receive e-mail notifications about spray plans at <http://gypsymoth.wi.gov>. People also can listen to a recorded message about our spray plans by calling the toll-free Gypsy Moth Information Line at 1-800-642-6684. Press menu option 1 for updates.

Spraying is expected to begin in southern Wisconsin in late May and end in northern Wisconsin in July or August. View maps of the specific spray areas online at <http://gypsymoth.wi.gov>.

Spraying will be completed by two programs:

- The Slow the Spread Program, conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, focuses its efforts in western Wisconsin where gypsy moth populations are low and emerging. The objective is to slow the westward spread of gypsy moth. This year's Slow the Spread treatments are planned in the following 25 counties:

Barron, Bayfield, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Dane, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jackson, La Crosse, Lafayette, Monroe, Polk, Richland, Rock, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Trempealeau, Vernon and Washburn.
- The Suppression Program, conducted by the Department of Natural Resources, serves eastern Wisconsin where gypsy moth is well established. These areas are treated to reduce damage from currently high populations of gypsy moth caterpillars. This is a voluntary program that works with landowners and local governments. It has one gypsy moth spray treatment planned this year: on the property of Governor Dodge State Park in Iowa County.

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Know what to expect

Spraying depends on favorable weather conditions—calm winds, no precipitation and high humidity. Planes may start spraying as early as 5 a.m. The planes fly very low and loudly over treatment sites and surrounding areas. Planes will remain in the area until the completion of the day's spray plans and as long as weather conditions remain favorable. Spraying may last into the late morning or afternoon.

Spraying could occur any day of the week, including weekends.

Most sites will be sprayed with Foray, which contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk). Btk is a naturally-occurring soil bacteria that kills gypsy moth caterpillars when they ingest it.

Btk is not toxic to people, bees, pets or other wild animals. However, some people with severe allergies may wish to stay indoors during spray application or avoid areas to be sprayed on the day that spraying occurs.

The formulation of this bacterial insecticide used by the state's cooperative gypsy moth program is listed with the Organic Materials Review Institute as acceptable for use in certified organic food production.

DNR Suppression sites will receive one application of Btk, while some DATCP Slow the Spread sites in western Wisconsin will receive two applications of Btk, three to five days apart, weather permitting.

In areas with endangered species of butterflies and moths, a gypsy moth specific product called Gypchek will be used instead of Btk.

The Slow the Spread program also will spray a mating disruptor to additional sites in western Wisconsin from mid-June to as late as early August. The pheromone in the mating disruptor makes it difficult for male moths to find female moths in low, isolated populations, preventing reproduction.

For more information about the programs or gypsy moths, visit the website <http://gypsymoth.wi.gov>. Or, call the toll-free Gypsy Moth Line at 1-800-642-MOTH (1-800-642-6684) to hear a recording of the programs' current spray plans or talk to staff.

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